

macropronotal examples occur as rarities and vice versa. It seems likely that an important function of a long pronotum is to protect the wings. When collected, the wings of the Dungeness specimen were already badly damaged. For ground-dwelling tetrigids, wings and a long pronotum may be of little value or may be a hindrance, so their reduction may be advantageous for populations that do not need to disperse widely. In contrast, for tetrigids, such as *T. ceperoi* that specialise in exploiting fragmented unstable habitats, fully-developed wings (protected by a long pronotum) may be necessary for dispersal.

The Dungeness specimen is clearly a rare aberration, but its occurrence possibly offers some insight into the history behind speciation in tetrigids. Less extreme neotenous variants possibly arise quite regularly by mutation. Brachypronotal, brachypterous forms would be selected against in species like *T. ceperoi* where there is often a need to disperse to new sites. The form that Ingrisch found in Sardinia may have been naturally selected in a locality that has remained stable for an unusually long time.

Other orthopteroids (Orthoptera, Dictyoptera and Dermaptera) found at Dungeness in the vicinity of Boulderwall Farm included *Tettigonia viridissima*, by song, 1.ix.2002, *Platycleis albopunctata*, 1.ix.2002, *Conocephalus discolor*, 11.viii.2002, 1.ix.2002, suggesting a further expansion of range since publication of Haes and Harding (1997. *Atlas of grasshoppers, crickets and allied insects in Britain and Ireland*. HMSO), *Chorthippus brunneus*, 11.viii.2002, 1.ix.2002, including one female var. 'green' *sensu* Ragge (1965. *Grasshoppers, crickets and cockroaches of the British Isles*. Warne: London), *Chorthippus albomarginatus*, 11.viii.2002, *Myrmeleotettix maculatus*, 21.vi.2001, 11.viii.2002, 1.ix.2002, *Ectobius panzeri*, 21.vi.2001, nymph, *Forficula auricularia*, 12.x 2001 and *Forficula lesnei*, 12.x. 2001, beaten from bramble.

I thank Simon Busuttill, RSPB warden, for his encouragement in conducting surveys of Orthoptera and other insects on the RSBP reserve.— JOHN PAUL, Downsflint, High Street, Upper Beeding, West Sussex BN44 3WN.

***Trichopria nigra* (Nees) (Hym.: Diapriidae) reared from *Sturmia bella* (Meigen) (Dipt.: Tachinidae) – a new host record**

On 23 August 2004 I collected two dipterous puparia from a thin covering of wind-blown, sandy soil under the basal leaves of a weed growing in an expansion joint in my concrete drive at Brantham, East Suffolk (O. S. grid reference TM 1134). On 26 August, a medium sized (approximately 8mm) tachinid fly with which I was unfamiliar hatched from one of the puparia whilst a few weeks later the other produced a host of parasitic wasps.

The fly, puparia and a sample of the wasps were sent to the Natural History Museum, London where the fly was identified as *Sturmia bella* (Meigen) and the wasps as *Trichopria nigra* (Nees) (= *inermis* Kieffer). *Sturmia bella* is a parasite of vanessid butterflies and was first recorded in this country from Southampton in 1998 (Ford *et al.*, 2000. *Ent. Rec.* **112**: 25 – 36), and since that time has spread rapidly. *Trichopria nigra* occurs commonly in the western Palaearctic with a range

extending at least as far east as Iran and Kazakhstan. It is a gregarious endoparasitoid of the pupae (within the puparium) of a range of cyclorrhaphan Diptera although records from tachinids are rare with this appearing to be the first from *Sturmia bella*.

It is almost certain that the puparia originated from pupae of *Aglais urtica* L., several of which were suspended from the eaves of the bungalow almost directly above the collection site. The fly and voucher specimens of the wasps are deposited at the Natural History Museum. I thank the following staff at the Natural History Museum, London: Howard Mendel (Collections Manager) for arranging identification of the specimens; David Notton for identification and helpful information on *T. nigra*; Nigel Wyatt for identification and helpful information on *S. bella*.— DAVID R. NASH, 3 Church Lane, Brantham, Suffolk CO11 1PU.

### ***Conistra rubiginea* (D.&S.) (Lep.: Noctuidae): A newcomer to Kent**

Seven examples of *Conistra rubiginea* were noted at my garden mv light in early spring 2005 – on 21.iii(2), 23.iii, 27.iii, 1.iv, 2.iv and 24.iv. This is a species apparently not recorded for Kent until 2002, when several specimens were seen at scattered locations in West Kent (VC 16) including Shorne Woods, near Gravesend and Bexley (Ferguson, 2004. *Kent Moth Report*. Butterfly Conservation).

Barrett (1900. *The Lepidoptera of the British Islands*. VI) regarded the moth as being very scarce, occasionally taken in Surrey and Sussex, and elsewhere in southern England, but it is not mentioned for Kent. Collins (1997. *The Larger Moths of Surrey*) indicates that the moth's stronghold comprises the woods and heaths of the north-west of the county, but notes significantly that recently increased sightings have been observed in the East and suggests that they may represent a trend to extension of range.

Thus, after two hundred years' absence from Kent it appears that the extension of range in Surrey suggested by Collins has progressed further eastwards into West Kent. The Dartford specimens of 2005 at least, judging from the scattered sightings over a wider area of West Kent since 2002, plus the pattern and number of *C. rubiginea* observed at my garden mv light in an area of mixed woodland, parkland and heath, are representatives of a successful local colonisation.— B. K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Dartford, Kent DA5 2HW.

### **A new site for *Melitaea arduinna* (Esper) (Lep.: Nymphalidae) in Bulgaria**

Abadjiev (2001. *An Atlas of the Distribution of the Butterflies in Bulgaria*. Pensoft.) lists only three widely separated localities for *Melitaea arduinna* in Bulgaria: Vrashka Chuka in the extreme north-west, Sboryanovo in the north-east, and Poda near Burgas in the south-east. It is not clear which, if any, of these populations are still extant. In May 2004, while on holiday in the Primorsko area of the southern Black Sea coast, I stumbled across a further colony of this elusive species on a low